

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS

1. A device for engaging an area of tissue comprising:

an arm having a proximal end and a distal end;

a cable extending through the arm, the cable having distal and proximal ends;

a tissue-contacting assembly connected to the distal end of the cable, the tissue-contacting assembly having a rotatable condition in which the assembly is free to rotate relative to the arm, and a locked condition in which the assembly is locked in a position relative to the arm, the tissue-contacting assembly having at least one surface for engaging tissue;

a cable tensioning mechanism connected to the proximal end of the cable and engaging the proximal end of the arm to pull the cable relative to the arm when the cable is tensioned to change the tissue-contacting assembly from the rotatable condition to the locked condition; and

a clamp coupled to the proximal end of the arm for fixing the arm to a retractor, the clamp comprising a mount and a jaw defining a dovetail-shaped groove for receiving a retractor element, the jaw being spring biased relative to the mount to clamp the retractor element within the dovetail-shaped groove and being movable against the bias to release the retractor element, and a manually operable cam mechanism for locking the jaw relative to the mount.

2. The device of claim 1 wherein the jaw is attached to the mount by a pin and a groove thus allowing the jaw to slide back and forth relative to the mount.

3. The device of claim 1 wherein the clamp is adapted to be fixed to retractor elements of varying width.

4. The device of claim 1 wherein the clamp further comprises dual compression springs.
5. The device of claim 1 wherein the arm comprises a plurality of links.
6. The device of claim 5 wherein the arm has an articulating condition in which the links are free to move relative to one another and a locked condition in which the links are locked relative to one another.
7. The device of claim 1 wherein the tissue-contacting assembly comprises first and second paddles each having means for engaging tissue.
8. A system for engaging an area of tissue comprising:
an arm having a proximal end and a distal end;
a tissue-contacting assembly connected to the distal end of the arm, the tissue-contacting assembly having at least one surface for engaging tissue; and
a clamp coupled to the proximal end of the arm for fixing the arm to a retractor, the clamp comprising a mount and a jaw defining a dovetail-shaped groove for receiving a retractor element, the jaw being spring biased relative to the mount to clamp the retractor element within the dovetail-shaped groove and being movable against the bias to release the retractor element, and a manually operable cam mechanism for locking the jaw relative to the mount.
9. The system of claim 8 wherein the jaw is attached to the mount by a pin and a groove thus allowing the jaw to slide back and forth relative to the mount.

10. The system of claim 8 wherein the clamp is adapted to be fixed to retractor elements of varying width.
11. The system of claim 8 wherein the clamp further comprises dual compression springs.
12. The system of claim 8 wherein the arm comprises a plurality of links.
13. The system of claim 12 wherein the arm has an articulating condition in which the links are free to move relative to one another and a locked condition in which the links are locked relative to one another.
14. The system of claim 8 wherein the tissue-contacting assembly comprises first and second paddles each having means for engaging tissue.
15. The system of claim 8 further comprising a retractor.
16. A system for engaging an area of tissue comprising:
an arm having a proximal end and a distal end;
a tissue-engaging assembly connected to the distal end of the arm; and
a clamp coupled to the proximal end of the arm for fixing the arm to a retractor, the clamp comprising a mount and a jaw defining a dovetail-shaped groove for receiving a retractor element, the jaw being

spring biased relative to the mount to clamp the retractor element within the dovetail-shaped groove and being movable against the bias to release the retractor element.

17. The system of claim 16 wherein the jaw is attached to the mount by a pin and a groove thus allowing the jaw to slide back and forth relative to the mount.

18. The system of claim 16 wherein the clamp is adapted to be fixed to retractor elements of varying width.

19. The system of claim 16 wherein the clamp further comprises dual compression springs.

20 The system of claim 16 wherein the arm comprises a plurality of links.

21 The system of claim 20 wherein the arm has an articulating condition in which the links are free to move relative to one another and a locked condition in which the links are locked relative to one another.

22. The system of claim 16 wherein the tissue-engaging assembly comprises first and second paddles each having means for engaging tissue.

23. The system of claim 16 further comprising a retractor.

24. The system of claim 16 wherein the clamp further comprises a manually operable cam mechanism for locking the jaw relative to the mount.